



# REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

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## ***What are the Regional Professional Development Networks (RPDNs)?***

Regional Professional Development Networks were initiated in 1991 by the Maryland State Department of Education and expanded to include all 24 local school systems in eight networks in 1998. Each network includes local school systems that have similar student populations and needs. The primary focus of the network is to support instructional improvement and to coordinate resources for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

## ***What are the purposes of the RPDNs?***

The networks serve the following purposes:

- \* Provide high quality and effective professional development that supports school improvement at both system and school level
- \* Support the implementation of the Core Learning Goals/Skills for Success at the high school level and improve instruction K-8
- \* Address the learning needs of staff at both system and school levels in regular education, special education, at-risk students, career-based education, and other special populations.

## ***How are the RPDNs structured?***

Each network has a steering committee that includes representatives of the local school systems, higher education, MSDE, and business and community members. The committee helps develop the network's annual grant proposal which is submitted to MSDE for continued funding and helps implement the activities, coordinate the resources, and evaluate the network's programs in terms of student achievement.

## ***Are there standards for the RPDNs?***

The networks follow the Standards for Staff Development defined by the National Staff Development Council and approved by the State Board of Education in October 1996. MSDE uses the national standards as the basis for funding staff development initiatives and for implementing staff development programs.

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***How do the  
RPDNs improve  
instruction and  
student learning?***

The networks support on-going, high quality staff development programs that result in documented improvement of instruction and improved student learning. The networks are collaborative ventures involving local school systems and MSDE. Members of the network share professional development plans, materials, evaluation design and results, and lessons learned. Each school system within the network is accountable for collecting appropriate data which demonstrates change in classroom instruction and student achievement.

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***How are the  
RPDNs funded?***

Funding is provided through grants from the Maryland State Department of Education and are awarded based on the degree to which the proposal reflects the national standards. This helps ensure that networks offer quality professional development that improves instruction and student learning.

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***Where do I get  
additional  
information?***

For additional information, contact Chief, Staff Development Branch, Division of Professional and Strategic Development, Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0381.